Mini Hydro Power Project

346. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the proposals to set up Mini Hydei Power Projects are pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the details alongwith reasons therefor, State-wise; and

(c) the number of projects cleared by the Union Government during 1996-97 till date, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Non-Conventional energy Sources provides promotional Incentives for development of Small Hydro power projets upto 3 MW station capacity. The decision to set up the project and their approval is done by the concerned States. No Proposal for setting up such Small Hydro power projects are pending with the Ministry. Also, no new small/mini hydel power project were supported by the Ministry during 1996-97 or till date .

Desert Development

347. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount spent by the Government on the desert development during Eight Five year plan;

(b) the desert development activities undertaken during that period, State-Wise with particular reference to Rajasthan;

(c) the amount earmarked for desert development in Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(d) the allocation made to Rajasthan for the purpose so far ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) : (a) Total expenditure incurred during the Eighth Five Year Plan under Desert Development Programme was Rs.33673 lakhs.

(b) In the first three years of the Eighth Five Year Plan, from 1992-93 to 1995-96, three core sector activities taken up under the Desert Development Programme in the country including Rajasthan were land resources development, water resources development and afforestation and pasture development. From 1995-96 the area development under the programme is being taken up on watershed basis. The activities to be taken up within a watershed project area are determined jointly by the villagers and Watershed Development Team of the Project Implementation Agency.

(c) The allocation for Desert Development for the 9th Five Year Plan is yet to be finalised.

(d) Total allocation made for Desert Development programme in Rajasthan since inception of the programme in 1977-78 to 1997-98 was Rs. 62151 lakhs.

Coverage of Local TV Programmes

348. SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) The number of villages in Gujarat and Rajasthan covered by both national and local TV Programmes; and

(b) The steps taken/to be taken to extend these facilities to more villages in Gujarat ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S.JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) Whereas TV service is available throughout the country, including all the villages in the States of Gujarat and Rajasthan, via satellite, by using appropriate dish antenna system, terrestrial transmission is also available to estimated 81.9% and 68.9% population of Gujarat and Rajasthan, respectively, including the population living in villages.

(b) With a view to increase terrestrial TV service in the State of Gujarat, 19 TV transmitter projects of varying power are presently under implementation and expected to be completed, in phases, by 1998-99 subject to availability of resouces and other infrastructural facilities.

Cable TV Operators

349. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a Mushroom growth of Cable-TV operators in the country;

(b) if so, the mechanism to regulate their functioning;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring a comprehensive legislation; and

(d) if not, the reasons there for ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The present Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act,1995 providing inter-alia for annual registration of cable networks has not been effective in regulating their operations. The Broadcasting Bill, 1997 which was introduced in the Parliament *inter-alia* seeks to repeal the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act,1995 and provide for effective regulation of cable TV networks in the country.

(d) Does not arise.